

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 are cancelled herewith, without prejudice.

1-9 Cancelled.

10. (New) An acrylate copolymer product prepared by the staged method of forming acrylate copolymer by solution polymerization in a single reaction zone which comprises:

- a) bulk charging a positive amount up to 90% of at least two acrylate monomers of said acrylate copolymer to a first stage reaction zone;
- b) polymerizing said at least two acrylate monomers in the first stage reaction zone to about 10 to 90% conversion in the presence of an initiator to monomers mole ratio, based on the monomers and initiator charged to the first stage, of about $1 \times 10^{-4}:1$ to $5 \times 10^{-2}:1$, the monomer content of one of the at least two acrylate monomers of the copolymer formed in the first stage being higher than the content of another of the at least two acrylate monomers in said first stage copolymer, the weight average molecular weight of the first stage copolymer being about 2000 to 500,000 Daltons; and
- c) continuing polymerization in the presence of additional initiator in a second stage while continuously adding the additional initiator and the balance of the monomers of said acrylate copolymer, over part or all of the balance of the polymerization cycle in order to maintain a constant initiator to monomers mole ratio for the monomers and initiator charged during the second stage, to the polymerization reaction mixture of the first stage at a monomers ratio lower in said one monomer than in the first stage monomers ratio, the initiator to monomers mole ratio for monomer and initiator charged in the second stage being different than the initiator to monomers mole ratio of monomers and initiator charged in the first stage;

the acrylate copolymer formed gradually continuously changing in weight average molecular weight from the end of said first stage and decreasing in concentration of said one monomer during the second stage, the weight average molecular weight of the total copolymer of the first stage and the second stage being about 2000 to 250,000 Daltons;
wherein said at least two acrylate monomers comprise ethyl acrylate and 2-ethylhexyl acrylate and said one monomer is 2-ethylhexyl acrylate.

11. (New) The acrylate copolymer product of claim 10 wherein said at least two acrylate monomers further comprise a fluorinated monomer selected from fluorinated acrylate, fluorinated methacrylate, or fluoroolefin.

12. (New) The acrylate copolymer of claim 10 wherein the monomers in the copolymer comprise 10 to 20 wt. % ethyl acrylate and 90 to 20 wt. % 2-ethylhexyl acrylate.

13. (New) The acrylate copolymer product of claim 11 comprising 10 to 80 wt. % ethyl acrylate, 20 to 90 wt. % 2-ethylhexyl acrylate and 0 to 20 wt. % fluorinated acrylate.

14. (New) The acrylate copolymer of claim 10 wherein said at least two acrylate monomers comprise ethyl acrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, methyl acrylate and butyl acrylate.